

Man and nature in new exhibit

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北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

I came, I saw, I left...

China's tourists building bad reputation

Though they may be taking money abroad, Chinese tourists have given their host countries plenty to complain about.

China visitors are developing a reputation for being noisy, unmannered and outright offensive. The only exception seems to be the younger visitors who are less eager to use the world as a giant spittoon.

Can an image campaign reform these bad behaviors?

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Foods fresh from the village

A new e-commerce company is promising traditional ingredients prepared where the air and water are still clean.



Popular campus magazine seeks new image

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NGO brings clean water to the countryside

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Culture month spreads info about Japan



Staff at the embassy prepare food for the attendees.

Photos by Liu Xiaochen

By Liu Xiaochen

The Japan Information and Culture Center at the Embassy of Japan is holding a month of cultural activities to introduce Japanese culture to Chinese audiences.

Last Saturday was the first of the events.

Mao Danqing, a Chinese writer who travels in Japan each year, was present to introduce his take on Japanese culture, comics and food with Hu Rong, a Chinese cartoonist who had lived in Japan for many years.

Both noted that Japan and China have extremely different cultures, and that contact is important to bridge the gap.

"What I learned in Japan is that we should have the heart to respect history so culture can continue. If cultural relics are preserved, it can bring context and meaning to modern society," Mao said.

Hu first visited Japan as a cartoonist in 1998 to study the humanities.

"Cartoons are just a way to show culture. We can learn more about cartoons by traveling the country," she said. "New technology is changing the way people read comics. The Internet is becoming a popular medium for new comic writers."

Hu is also interested in the rapid spread of ideas.

"Comics are different from art. They are designed to give readers the most information in the shortest time. Japan pushes this function to the



Professor Hideki Hiratsuka introduces Japanese food.



Japanese food provided to participants

with addressing the concerns of the nation. We don't need to worry about these problems too much, because we can learn from Japan how to solve them," he said. "If China and Japan cooperate in science and technology, we can overcome a lot."

Mao also answered questions about studying in Japan with a teacher from the Embassy of Japan.

The Japan Information and Culture Center also cooperated with the Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad (JRO), which held a Japanese food exchange at the event.

Hideki Hiratsuka, a professor of Japanese cooking at Gastronomy Department which is professional training college for dietitian and culinary specialists, introduced various Japanese foods such as sashimi, sushi, tempura, laver roll and Japanese barbecue.

Participants could taste Japanese food made by top chefs at the activity.

"JRO spreads healthy and delicious Japanese food to the world. We prepared representative dishes to strengthen the friendship between our two countries," said Kenji Fujimura, operation director from JRO.

The Embassy of Japan is celebrating the anniversary of its relocation to Liangmaqiao, Chaoyang District. Throughout the last year the center has used its new venue and equipment to hold many interesting events.

Embassy officers share life in US

By Liu Xiaochen

The officers at the Embassy of the US can be seen at many formal occasions, but their daily lives remain a mystery. The Beijing American Center (BAC) provided a chance for people to learn more about their lives.

As part of a month-long diversity and inclusiveness program, BAC invited embassy officers Ervin Massinga and Mark Neighbors, cultural affairs specialist Pilar Pereyra and political officer Brett Blackshaw to speak on Tuesday at Faces of the US Embassy.

The four officers, all from diverse cultural backgrounds, answered questions about ethnic diversity in the US during the panel session.

Most had a positive impression about the nation's progress in fighting discrimination.

"My own children are mixed, actually. They do have other challenges to overcome. It just makes things different and dynamic," said Neighbors, whose mother is Chinese.

"You may be turned down for a ride home and not given certain jobs and chances. It is not simple to overcome challenges, but they can be overcome," said Pereyra, who was born in a Spanish-speaking

family. "Fortunately, the US has a very strong legal system. Discrimination and prejudice because of your race or gender is illegal."

"America is a young country and a nation founded on laws. You don't become a citizen based on your dad's job or your country of origin or how you look. The desire to ensure people have equal rights is very strong in the US," said Blackshaw, who was born in the UK.

"People realize that making the world fair is important. Many problems that were overlooked before are being recognized. Unfair things have been overturned to make life less terrible," said Massinga, a black American.

They also talked about daily life, holidays, work and customs. Neighbors said his family still keeps some of the practices of Chinese New Year.

"The US is extremely diverse and changing fast. By 2015, white Americans will not be the majority," Massinga said.

"Because my workmates and I have a similar education background, we have many common interests," he said. "As in China, finding a job in the US is not easy. Before we became officers here, we had to go through many rounds of tests."



The panel of officers answer questions. Photo provided by BAC

Proclamation of Verified Beijing Today Journalists Press Cards, 2012

Huang Daohen, Jian Rong, Li Zixin, Wei Ying, Yu Shanshan, Zhang Nan, Zhao Hongyi

Beijing Municipal Bureau of Press and Publication

Informants' hotline: 6408 1164

March 12, 2013

Campus magazine seeks to reinvent itself

北斗
ibaidu.net



By Liu Xiaochen

Beidou, an online campus magazine created in 2008, has been rounding up students interested in literary creation. Many of the group's writings are shared on Renren.com, a popular campus-oriented social network.

After five years, Beidou continues while other campus magazines have folded up and died.

Since 2009, it has maintained an Internet base at ibaidu.net, a non-profit website managed and operated by student volunteers. Articles published on the website are the best original works of the nation's college students.



Activity posters of Beidou Photos provided by Li Zhuoran

Platform for exchange

Beidou was founded to help college students spread and share knowledge about social sciences and the humanities.

Its best known student writers have published their works in wider circulation: *College Students, Don't be the Victims of Social Change* by Jiang Jian and *Don't Surrender to This World* by Chen Xuan are only two examples.

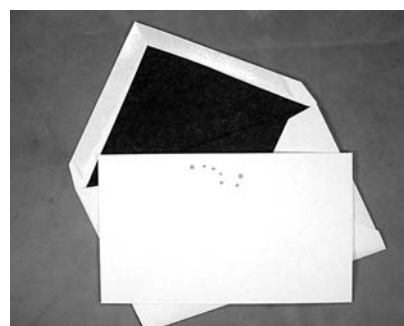
"Beidou is certainly more than a literary organization," said Li Zhuoran, Beidou's head of operations. "I believe the reason it has lasted so long is its depth. We gather people who are interested in topics like political ethics, philosophy and jurisprudence."

"The magazine reflects and expresses student opinion. It has the ideal atmosphere of spontaneous public discussion. Consequently, that can also draw criticism and ridicule. We welcome serious views and try to resolve any conflict," said Liu Yizhou, chief editor of Beidou.

While many schools have a campus newspaper, interesting articles rarely make it in, said Wu He, a designer at ibaidu.net. "For example, news about Steve Jobs' death was withheld for being 'entertainment,'" she said.

"Beidou's articles are very interesting and different from what we usually read. I can learn something from them," she said.

Offline gatherings began shortly after Beidou was founded. Because the magazine was based on Renren.com, the names and schools of its members



were easy to find.

This year's gathering on March 3 was Beidou's 11th nationwide.

The website ibaidu.net often organizes discussions and screening for students, as well as training courses to teach the basics of design and typesetting.

Internal structure

Beidou has 105 volunteers now from colleges across the country who make up the magazine's council, department personnel, column editors and those in charge of technology and operations.

Liu is the second editor in chief. "I usually check the contents of the article, perform some edits, consider new columns, keep up with the volunteers and cooperate with related communities to organize activities," he said.

While Beidou may have expanded, the development level of its personnel remains rather green.

"Many industries need time to accumulate mature people, but mature team members tend to lack passion. I want to see experienced people working together with the most enthusiastic," Li said.

Currently, Beidou publishes regular collections about campus culture, politics and education. The money for these comes from donations, because most of the members dislike the idea of running a proper organization, Li said.

"We are not entrepreneurs with a clear purpose. It is our career but we are not expecting to get rich," Liu said.

Transformation

At the 11th gathering, Liu suggested

a new slogan for Beidou: "Representing the youth."

"Every university has its own campus media, but most of these are only distributed on the campus. Beidou is the only one that has reached beyond the schools," Liu said.

Beidou is changing from an underground magazine to a grassroots organizing force for young writers, he said.

"We had many writers with very distinct personalities who impressed readers. Though some have left us, their work remains a part of our legacy," Li said.

But that may be in the past.

Beidou is facing a bottleneck: volunteers are scarce, and the group has yet to break away from the aging Renren network.

Liu said they plan to develop ibaidu.net into a portal for the future while maintaining their old "magazine" form on various social networks. They will also develop applications to deliver articles on mobile devices.

Unlike previous campus magazines, Beidou is planning on big, official publications rather than the private sharing of its last five years. It is also planning to move more of its business offline.

"There were a lot of student magazines and independent campus media coming out in 2008. They died quickly. Beidou is the only one that has survived," Li said.

"Our purpose is very simple: we want Beidou to be something that is passed on from generation to generation."

HSBC bank helps kids manage pocket money

By Huang Daoheng

Students dreaming of Barbie dolls or Transformers may have a new way to get their toys without begging their parents.

Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) and Beijing Children's Weekly have launched a new program to help the capital's young students learn to manage their pocket money.

"Young people should be responsible for their pocket money. It's the

first step in finance," said Malini Thadani, head of corporate sustainability at HSBC.

The advice came at an interview with young journalists in the Red Scarf News Press, an organization of primary school students run by Beijing Children's Weekly.

While most Chinese parents do not let their children engage in finance, Thadani suggested students negotiate with parents and start to learn financ-

ing on their own.

Thadani said HSBC has partnered with Junior Achievement and offered courses for students to learn money management.

Li Xiaobing, vice president of Beijing Youth Daily Group, the owner of *Beijing Children's Weekly*, was optimistic about the program.

"Financial literacy education is usually ignored here in China. This could be a good start," he said.



Students are being encouraged to study finance. Photo by Zhou Hongxiu

NGO brings clean water to polluted villages



With the help of Greenovation Hub, students at Huang Laoying Elementary School get clean drinking water.

Photos provided by Greenovation Hub

By Bao Chengrong

Severe water pollution in Shandong Province has finally moved the provincial government to act. In a recent announcement, it pledged to allocate 410 million yuan to combat the problem.

In the countryside, nothing is more valuable than clean water.

Greenovation Hub has been drawing attention to the crisis by publishing firsthand information about polluted areas on Weibo and calling on the public to join.

Established in 2012, Greenovation Hub supports efforts at green transition in China. Lu Sicheng, the founder, is also the executive director of Friends of Nature and the former Secretary-General of SEE Foundation.

Shandong is not the first time Greenovation has become involved in water safety. Last year, its members visited polluted villages all over the country.

The project, titled "A Glass of Clean Water," began as an effort to prevent pollution but eventually became an agent of individual relief.

"Primer Wen used to say 300 million villagers lacked access to safe drinking water. The central government has an extensive approach to solve this problem – our project can play a supplementary and supervisory role," said Chen Fangzhou, a member for the project.

"Most projects to control water pollution want to fight it at the source: factory sewage. In China, the problem is too urgent. We decided to satisfy villagers' cries directly," he said.

Thus far, Chen and two other project members have visited as many as 60 villages in eight provinces and selected four to use as project sites.

One that impressed him the most was Da Zhangzhuan, Henan Province, where villagers have lived beside a giant landfill for 10 years.

Villagers said the river used to run



Chen Fangzhou does quick water test.



Da Jia Zhuang villagers dig wells.



Pink pharmaceutical waste spills into the water by Guan Diying village.

clean and full of fish, but the presence of the dump ruined it as well as the quality of their drinking water. By summer, it was a breeding ground for insects.

A plan to dig a deep well in 2004 failed when pipes burst at the water supply factory. Since then, villagers have been getting their drinking water from shallow wells.

Despite letters to the local government explaining how more than 50 villagers had died from the water pollution, no help ever came.

A quick test of the village water revealed that the content of iron and manganese was 70 times higher than the national limits.

Greenovation decided to help the villagers to repair the abandoned well and provide them with the tools needed for continued maintenance.

Another severely polluted site was Ai Jiagou, Hunan Province, where villagers use a brook high in fluorine to wash their clothes and vegetables. Dental fluorosis is extremely common among the villagers.

The local government tried to divert some water from the Hangjiang River to solve the problem, but villagers rejected it because they distrust the government and cannot bear the fees.

Because the village is sparsely populated, the team provided defluorinating equipment to each of its 56 families.

Searching for polluted villages is a challenge for Greenovation Hub. Chen said he and his colleagues have gotten a lot of aids from local NGOs.

In Xiangyang, Hubei Province, the Water Conservancy Bureau contacted the team and introduced it to two polluted villages, one of which was the site of Huang Laoying Elementary School.

The school's 400 students had no choice but to drink water directly from the school's pipes. Boiled water is a

luxury available only during lunch.

Tests revealed the water was high in chlorine and microorganisms, and the school had no equipment to filter or disinfect this.

The group had to give up another aid plan in Guan Diying Village, Inner Mongolia, where it was barred by the local government.

Chen said the conditions were shocking. Just two kilometers away from the village, pink pharmaceutical waste was pouring into the river.

The high fluorine and arsenic content of the water caused many villagers to develop arthritis, thyroid and skin disease. Arsenic is listed as a carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Water pollution has become a national problem. It is widely reported that in China, 70 percent of the shallow groundwater, a major source for villages, is polluted; 72 percent of rural drinking water lacks basic disinfection; 14 times more rural children die from diarrhea than those in the city.

"Most villagers don't trust their local government or industry, but they also don't know how to perform their own tests on water quality. We want to bring them the tools," Chen said.

Chen said the group considered organizing villagers to establish their own water maintenance committees and build a rural network for villagers to exchange their experiences with neighboring communities.

But that will have to wait until the group can find financial support besides the money it has received from SEE Foundation and Shih Wing Ching Foundation.

Still, Chen sees hope.

The group is working on water investigation handbooks and searching for new villages in need of aid. Chen and his colleagues said they plan to take on 16 new project sites this year.

Chinese tourists disrupt the world

By Zhao Hongyi

More and more Chinese are going abroad, bringing revenue to other countries and cities, but they're giving the people in those places something else, too: reasons to complain.

Increasingly, Chinese tourists are being labeled noisy, unmannered and offensive. To fight this image, China is beginning to use public campaigns to educate future travelers about how to behave.

Meanwhile, authorities hope that the younger generation of travelers, many of whom have cosmopolitan worldviews, can help improve the reputation of the country's other tourists.

Many Chinese tourists unwelcome

According to the National Bureau of Tourism of China, more than 82 million Chinese went abroad for tourism in 2012.

They spent \$85 billion abroad in places in Southeast Asia, Korea, Japan, Europe and North America.

Chinese tourists each spent \$850 on average, trailing only tourists from the US and Germany.

But at the same time, a number of travel websites and articles them labeled "unwelcome."

For instance, the world's largest online tourism company, *Expedia*, conducted a survey of more than 15,000 hotels in Europe in 2007 and found Indian and Chinese tourists were ranked the worst.

The research institute Mandala Research released a report in March 2012 that said US tourists and Chinese tourists were the worst in the world.

Unseemly behaviors exhibited include spitting, shouting, not washing hands after using the toilet, going out in groups, hoarding buffet food, overreliance on cash, staying in cheap hotels while splurging on luxury goods, stealing seats on public transportation, cutting, taking off their shoes and socks and general rowdiness.

In general, student tourists are better, said a tour guide surnamed Wu. It's those who were born in the 1950s and '60s that cause the most problems.

From agrarian to modern society

In fact, the Chinese were not always like this. Before the end of the Ming Dynasty, prior to the 17th century, the Chinese were famously welcomed enthusiastically by hosts around southeast Asia, the Per-



Hundreds of tourists from the Chinese mainland line up to purchase Prada bags in Hong Kong.

IC Photos



Chinese tourists ride the bull sculpture on Wall Street.



Chinese tourists crossing barriers in London.



Chinese tourists posed for photographing in Paris.

sian Gulf and East Africa.

Sometimes they were so welcomed that they received free accommodations, according to Guo Xiaochong, professor of culture and communications of the University

of International Relations.

This made the Koreans and Japanese follow suit.

But after the end of the Ming Dynasty and following a population explosion, society began to unravel. People became

ruder, and with diminishing personal space, they exerted behavior such as elbowing and cutting in line.

Then there was the Cultural Revolution, which emphasized the logic of struggle, or fighting.

The Japanese experienced the same problems during their history. In the 1960s and 1970s, Japanese tourists were considered stiff, "photo-snapping robots."

Koreans became rich in the 1980s and 1990s after the "Hanjiang Miracle," but their tourists fared no better than the Japanese.

In the 1960s, following rapid economic growth, Singaporean society faced a morality crisis as well. Uncivilized behavior disappeared in the late 1990s thanks in part to draconian punishment and fines.

In Taiwan, tourists from the island were seen as "swimming in money" – but behaving like fishermen.

Government leads the way

The problem attracted the attention of the senior officials not long ago.

Li Renzhi, director of the National Bureau of Tourism of China, said that China will launch a three-year campaign to teach basic public civility.

The campaign was initiated by Li Changchun, standing committee member of the Communist Party of China.

The bureau will list unsuitable behaviors and compile them into a book called *Tourist Guide for Chinese Abroad*.

The Chinese government has launched quite a few similar campaigns before, such

as "Patriotic Health Movement" in 1952 and the movement of "five stresses, four points of beauty and three loves" in 1981.

Before the founding of the People's Republic, Chiang Kai-shek launched the "New Life" Movement in the 1930s.

But all these movements failed. The reason, experts say, is the government only uses broad concepts to call for better behavior, rather than spending effort in reinforcing the details.

"The concept can hardly make people realize the importance," said Ge Jianxiong, a professor of history at Fudan University. "You should tell people what to do in detail."

Education is the key

In China, ceremony and courtesy education re-appeared only a dozen years ago.

At the beginning, only foreign companies needed to educate their Chinese employees.

In one class, trainers tell participants what to wear, how to prepare their nails and how to smile.

"Lying afterwards out of courtesy is part of culture," said instructor Zhou Jiping.

"Unlike politics, the military and economy, culture exists in the hearts of people," Zhou said. "The government can hardly get people to be polite."

"Teachers shouted at university students, ordering this and ordering that," said Ding Yue, a Taiwanese student in Peking University. "What the students learn today, they'll teach to society in the future."

"But I'm confident that new generations will be better behaved."

Pushing to be among the world's foremost museums

By Chen Nan

Urgent environmental problems in China have brought vigorous focus to the relationship between man and nature. In a new exhibition in Beijing, works from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art provide answers in extraordinary aesthetic ways.

How does culture and art affect environmental sensibilities? Are there universal features in the human relationship with nature? These questions are embedded in the exhibition, which also attempts to bring Western art to Chinese masses.

A new exhibition at the National Museum of China (NMC) called *Earth, Sea, and Sky: Nature in Western Art – Masterpieces from the Metropolitan Museum of Art* is seeking to apply universal thinking to some of today's most pressing issues.

Until May 9, visitors will be treated to works from world-renowned artists who are displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

The title of the exhibition is based on Daoist philosophy. Chen Lüsheng, curator of the National Museum of China, said this is because Daoism realizes the harmony that exists between human beings and nature.

Chinese artists have created nature-themed work for thousands of years, Chen said. This exhibition is to give the Chinese public a chance to see Western artists who have done the same.

The lineup features painters, sculptors and decorative artists from antiquity to present day. Works include paintings, photography, lacquerware, ceramics, tapestries, bronze, silver and stone.

This marks the Metropolitan Museum of Art's first traveling exhibition of the year. It's organized into the sub-themes of Nature Idealized, the Human Presence in Nature, Animals, Flowers and Gardens, Nature in the Camera Lens, Earth and Sky, and Watery World.

Many of these pieces are arriving in China for the first time.

Thomas Campbell, the director and CEO of the Met, said this partnership is a pivotal milestone in the cultural exchange between China and the US.

"Never before has an exhibition of this scope and theme, drawn entirely from the Met's holdings, come to China," he said.

Signature works include those by Rembrandt, Claude Monet and Edward Hopper, as well as anonymous masters from the ancient and medieval worlds. Also on display will be Vincent van Gogh's *Cypresses* (1889) and Paul Gauguin's *Tahitian Women Bathing* (1892).

The museum will offer a high-tech audio tour in which viewers can scan a bar code near each piece to hear a description. This, too, is a first, though NMC plans to continue the practice in future exhibitions.

In recent years, museums have endeavored to increase their international profile.

The Met, meanwhile, is coming off one of the greatest runs in the history of modern museums.

With more than 5 million visitors per year, the Met is New York's most popular single-site tourist attraction and holds 2 million individual objects in its collection.

The NMC, flanking Tian'anmen Square, come to recognize the country's presence in the global art world, and sought to take advantage of the growing number of museums in China.

The NMC has catalogued its entire collection of 1.2 million pieces of cultural relics. More than 4.1 million people visit every year. "Its attraction is closely related to its abundant collections and collaboration with global museums," Chen said.

Chen and his colleagues are striving to turn the institution into one of the world's top museums.

The new NMC values international collaboration with other museums. Already, it has collaborated with three major national museums in Germany to put on the *Art of the Enlightenment* exhibition.

It cooperated with the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum for *Passion for Porcelain: Masterpieces of Ceramics*.

And it collaborated with the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities

to put on *Renaissance in Florence: Masterpieces and Protagonists*.

"It's expected that the number of works and the academic depth of this exhibition will have a sensational effect," Chen said. "Chinese audiences used to learn about these masterpieces through publications, but now they can directly experience and appreciate the aura and the enchantment of these original works in China."

NMC is also planning to unveil huge international art exhibition programs.

"Van Gogh's *Cypresses* is printed on posters, brochures in this show," Chen said. In fact, "this is a warm-up for the next exhibition in cooperation with Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum."



Head of youth with a wreath
Cypro-Classical period, mid-5th century BC



Plate depicting Metabus and Camilla (1539)
Francesco Xanto Avelli da Rovigo



Cypresses (1889)
Vincent van Gogh



The Manneporte (étretat) (1883)
Claude Monet



The Lighthouse at Two Lights (1929)
Edward Hopper



Venice, from the Porch of Madonna della Salute (1835)

Joseph Mallord William Turner

Photos provided by NMC

Make your own of beer in your kitchen



Beijing Homebrewing Society's tasting event

Many beer restaurants will order custom-designed home-brewing equipment.

CFP Photo

By Annie Wei

If you've ever tasted the beer at any event organized by the Beijing Homebrewing Society, or grabbed a pinch at popular beer houses such as Panda Brewpub or Great Leap Brewing, you might have been struck with the idea of making your own beer this summer.

It's not difficult at all, said Yin Hai, a core member of Beijing Homebrewing Society, "as long as you follow the procedures."

"There are plenty of English sites that share information and techniques of home brewing," he said. For the Chinese, you can purchase a copy of *Get Your Own Brew* (68 yuan), written by Gao Yan, a local home brewer.

For people who want to try but aren't ready to spend big bucks on an entry-level kit, Yin said that it's possible to brew with simple kitchen equipment.

One needs a large kitchen pot, cooking thermometer, large funnel, rolling pin (to crush grains), bottled distilled water, big bottling containers, polyvinyl tubing to block air during siphoning and fermentation, and empty, clean glass bottles.



Use recycled bottles for new beer.

Photos by Yin Hai



Yin Hai and his friend brew their own beer.

"You need to buy malt extract, hops and brewer yeast," Yin said. They are readily available from Taobao and inexpensive, such as 12 yuan for 400 liters of dark malt.

"By the end of June, the city will have more stores that sell such kits," he said. Some people have worked on business plans to encourage the growth of home brew by selling kits, organizing tastings, and sending staffers to meet customers for face-to-face training.

If you like to spend some real cash on an entry-level kit and make beer for friends and family, we recommend you check out home brewer Gao Yan's online store at Oktoberfest.taobao.com.

It has everything you need for home brewing, such as yeast bottles (10 yuan), air locks (10 yuan) and PVC tubs (20 yuan).

For bigger productions, Panda Brewpub's co-founder and brewer

Pan Dinghao said there are two things a novice brewer should be mindful of: one is the temperature at which malt starch turns into sugar.

"You need an hour to make sure the temperature remains 66 to 68 C," Pang said. He suggested using a Mash / Lauter Tun (380 yuan), which helps maintain the temperature at a certain level and separate the clear liquid wort from the residual grain.

The second is cooling. "The faster the liquid cools down, the better," Pan said. One can purchase a stainless steel cooling coil (550 yuan for 16 meters).

The beer flavor depends on the malt. "You can buy malts which are already baked or you can bake them to create a stronger flavor by using an oven," he said.

After placing it with yeast and letting the liquid stay for two or three weeks, it's ready to drink.

"You will find it's more delicious and costs less than any commercial beer, less than the 15-yuan bottles at the supermarket," Pan said.

Those who want to learn more can check basicbrewing.com, where there's information, podcasts and video.

You can also follow the Beijing Homebrew Society's Weibo account and join their monthly event at weibo.com/beijingbrewing.

Nanshizhao brings a village's best food to your doorstep



Every family in Nanshancun knows how to make noodles.



Villagers hang their noodles in the morning.
Photos by Su Nan

Dried cauliflower



Ginger wine

By Annie Wei

With the development of e-commerce and the infrastructure to deliver, we can order daily ingredients from remote regions where the air and water are clean, and the quality is assured.

This week, we recommended Nanshizhao.taobao.com, a small online food store specializing in products from Rui'an, a township city near Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province.

The owners are a young couple. Su Nan, a 27-year-old woman from Jiangsu Province, moved to the hometown of her boyfriend in his native Rui'an last year.

She realized the place was filled with delicious eats.

Shamian, a kind of fine and thin noodle that hangs in the yard like yarn threads, is the region's specialty.

"It doesn't have a chewy texture," Su said.

The water used to boil the noodles should be discarded afterwards, as they require lots of salt. Adding a little bit of yellow rice wine, mixed with minced ginger, mushroom and pork, makes it taste delicious.

The store sells shamian starting from 400 grams (14.6 yuan), enough for two people.

When the couple planned to open an online store, they decided to work with only the best.

The traditional way of making food has its own way of paying respect to nature, Su said.

Shamian is made of flour and salt, the degree of which varies according to the weather. Humidity has a strong impact on the noodle's texture.

Normally, the villagers start by making paste after lunch. At 7 am the next morning, they're hung to dry.

When the weather is good, the noodles are hung for two to four hours. A worker has to watch at the site to make sure the noodles don't get too dry, otherwise they will crack and break.

The farmers that Su's store use can only make 40 kilograms per day, compared to some families that can produce 70 kilograms. This way, Su knows each batch is done right.

Currently, the store only sells shamian,

six dried vegetables, two kinds of dried seafood and homemade ginger wine.

"We're understaffed right now," Su said.

The store's ginger wine (16.8 yuan for 350 grams) comes recommended.

For most Chinese fried dishes, ginger is like garlic: you add some in heated oil before adding other ingredients to the wok.

Ginger wine is a common daily ingredient in the Wenzhou area. The ginger is fried for 40 minutes with homemade sticky rice wine. As the procedure is complicated, many families do not fry their own ginger wine anymore.

The store works with a farmer who has been frying ginger for 20 years. His ginger wine is aromatic but mild in taste.

"The town is located in a mountainous area and isn't the easiest to get to," she said.

Although the villagers use clean spring water to make food, people outside don't realize it until they taste the difference.

After Su moved out there, they had many friends who visited and loved the local food. They suggested that Su open an online store.

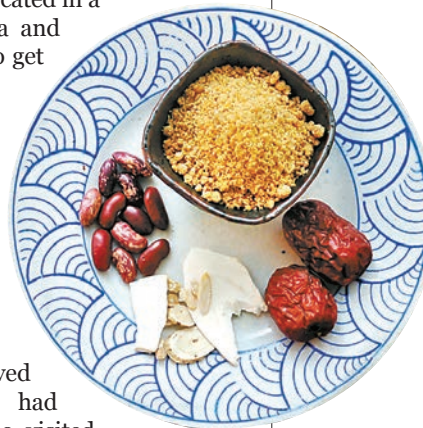
There's lots of competition, but since Nanshizhao's launch in February, its key product – shamian – has been ordered 2,500 times; other foods like dry cauliflower, have been ordered about 800 times.

The place carries lots of dried food. "In the fall, you can see hanging dried fish everywhere," Su said.

The dry cauliflower (14.9 yuan for 200 grams) is worth trying.

The dry vegetables have a nice aroma when you open the package, and they're crispy. Simply soak them in tepid water for 15 minutes and fry them with oil or meat. One serving of dried vegetables is equivalent to six servings of regular veggies.

For each delivery, there will be notes introducing how the food should be prepared.



Crushed brown sugar